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CAN FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES AFFECT FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS.

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BASED ON THE PREMISES THAT LENGTH OF CLASSES MAY VARY, THAT TEAM TEACHING AND SPECIAL CLASS GROUPING MAY BE BETTER SUITED FOR STUDY, AND THAT STUDENTS NEED MORE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE CREATIVELY AND INDEPENDENTLY SUBJECTS NOT USUALLY IN CONVENTIONAL SCHEDULES, CERTAIN NEW SCHEDULAR DESIGNS HAVE BEEN INITIATED IN MINNEAPOLIS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS. A STARTLING RISE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS RESULTED FROM THESE EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMS. THE RAMSEY MULTIPLE SCHEDULE ALLOWS COMBINATIONS OF CONVENTIONAL CLASS PERIODS AND SIX FLEXIBLE PERIODS, AND PERMITS INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS TO ELECT ADDITIONAL STUDY SUBJECTS AND ACCELERATED CLASSES. THE FOLWELL MULTIPLE VARIABLE PROGRAM INTRODUCED IN 1965-66 ALLOWS FOUR OR FIVE BLOCK CLASSES WITHIN THE MASTER SCHEDULE, AND STUDENTS, MEMBERS OF TEAMS, ARE SCHEDULED IN 4-HOUR TIME BLOCKS WITH TEAMS OF TEACHERS WHO PLAN PROGRAM VARIATIONS OF THE TIME BLOCK. HOYE'S FLUID BLOCK SCHEDULE, WHICH IS SIMPLER AND HAS MORE VARIABILITY, BREAKS THE DAY INTO LARGE BLOCKS OF TIME INSTEAD OF CONVENTIONAL PERIODS, AND PERMITS TIME MODULE VARIATIONS, SPECIAL GROUPING, INDEPENDENT STUDY, TEAM TEACHING, AND BETTER PLANNING FOR THE NEEDS OF THE STUDENTS. THIS ARTICLE IS PUBLISHED IN "MINNESOTA FORIEGN LANGUAGE BULLETIN," VOLUME 6, NUMBER 4, 1966. (AS)

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# Can Flexible Schedules Affect Foreign Language Enrollments

-Almon Hoye

HOW CAN FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING TECHNIQUES AFFECT FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS? THE QUESTION REALLY SHOULD DEAL WITH THE EFFECTS OF FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES UPON THE TOTAL PROGRAM; FOR IN HASTE TO INCREASE REQUIREMENTS IN SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION, WE OFTEN HAVE BEEN GUILTY OF PUSHING OTHER ESSENTIAL CURRICULAR EXPERIENCES OUT OF THE CHILD'S PROGRAM.

THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT CURRICULUM DESIGNS SHOULD INVOLVE LESS EMPHASIS ON SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION. WE LIVE IN AN AGE BURSTING WITH TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES. CHILDREN MUST BE PREPARED TO FACE NEW RESPONSIBILITIES. AND NEW TENSIONS. BUT THEY MUST ALSO LEARN TO COMMUNICATE WITH PEOPLE IN OTHER CULTURES. THEY MUST LEARN TO APPRECIATE THE ART, MUSIC AND LITERATURE OF THE WORLD. THEY MUST DEVELOP A SENSE OF ARETÉ.

THE CONVENTIONAL SCHEDULE IS TOO ARCHAIC TO SUPPORT A MODERN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM. IT WAS DESIGNED TO SATISFY THE REQUIREMENTS OF A GREAT MASS OF STUDENTS AND LARGELY PRECLUDES THE FLEXIBILITY REQUIRED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH VARYING INTERESTS AND ABILITIES. IT HAS SURVIVED BECAUSE OF THE REVERENCE PAID IT BY ADMINISTRATORS WHO STAND IN AWE OF ITS MAGICAL POWER TO CONTROL THE LOGISTICS OF PUPIL-TEACHER MOVEMENT. TOO MANY ADMINISTRATORS HAVE FAILED TO UNDERSTAND THE VARYING DIMENSIONS OF SCHEDULE MAKING. CONSEQUENTLY THEY HAVE SETTLED FOR RIGIDITY.

THE SCHEDULE OFTEN HAS COME TO

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DOMINATE THE STUDENTS, THE TEACHERS, THE ADMINISTRATORS, AND THE CURRICULUM. WE SEE AROUND US A STRUGGLE WHICH HAS BEEN LEFT AT A STALEMATE. BY EMPLOYING MAKESHIFT DEVICES SUCH AS DROPPING REQUIRED COURSES, CONDUCTING EARLY MORNING OR LATE AFTERNOON CLASSES, TEACHING DURING THE LUNCH PERIODS, STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED TO TAKE "EXTRA" ELECTIVES SUCH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGES. THESE DEVICES ARE HARDLY THE ANSWER.

ALMON HOYE

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE LOOK INTO THE ASSUMPTIONS AND THE DIMENSIONS UPON WHICH SCHEDULES SHOULD BE BUILT. WE SHOULD REALIZE: (1) THAT STUDENTS OFTEN LEARN WITHOUT A TEACHER BEING PRESENT, (2) THAT ALL TEACHERS DO NOT EXCEL IN ALL PHASES OF THE TEACHING ART, (3) THAT TEAM PREPARATION AND TEAM TEACHING MAY INCREASE TEACHING MORALE AND EFFICIENCY, (4) THAT THE LENGTH OF A CLASS PERIOD MAY APPROPRIATELY VARY ACCORDING TO THE NEEDS OF EACH SUBJECT, (5) THAT THE SIZE OF A CLASS GROUP MAY VARY FROM DAY TO DAY AND FROM CLASS TO CLASS ACCORDING TO ITS PURPOSES, (6) THAT ALL STUDENTS IN A GROUP NEED NOT BE STUDYING THE SAME MATERIAL AT THE SAME TIME, (7) THAT THE SELF CONTAINED CLASSROOM MAY BE SUITABLE ONLY FOR LIMITED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES, (8) THAT STUDENTS LEARN BEST IN AN APPROPRIATE PSYCHOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT, (9) THAT CHRONOLOGICAL AGE MAY NOT BE THE APPROPRIATE DETERMINER OF GRADE PLACEMENT, AND (10) THAT EDUCATIONAL POLICING AGENCIES MAY NOT YET HAVE DISCOVERED THE OPTIMUM STANDARDS FOR TIME ALLOTMENTS IN EACH SUBJECT.

NEW APPROACHES TO SCHEDULAR DESIGN ARE BEING TRIED IN MANY PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. RESEARCH REPORTS INDICATE VARYING DEGREES OF SUCCESS. KEARNEY, ANDERSON, HOWARD AND SHARKIN, USING DIFFERENT TYPES OF FLEXIBILITY ACHIEVED FAVORABLE RESULTS. HOWEVER, BEASLEY, HUNT, NESBITT AND TAFFEL FOUND LITTLE OR NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RESULTS ACHIEVED IN CONVENTIONAL AND FLEXIBLE DESIGNS (SEE BIBLIOGRAPHY).

THE APPROACHES USED BY THE AUTHOR AT RAMSEY AND FOLWELL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN MINNEAPOLIS WERE DESIGNED NOT TO ACHIEVE SUPERIOR GAINS IN PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT BUT RATHER TO ALLOW STUDENTS TO EXPLORE MORE WIDELY, TO USE MORE CREATIVELY THE RESOURCES OF THE SCHOOL, AND TO SPARE STUDENTS THE NECESSITY OF MAKING CHOICES BETWEEN IMPORTANT SUBJECTS, E.G., SCIENCE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES, JUST TO SATISFY THE REQUIREMENTS OF A RIGID CONVENTIONAL SCHEDULE. THE RAMSEY AND FOLWELL EXPERIMENTS SHOWED DRAMATICALLY HOW MORE FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES CAN AFFECT FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS.

THE <u>RAMSEY MULTIPLE SCHEDULE</u> IS A RELATIVELY UNCOMPLICATED DESIGN BASED ON THE SIX HOUR SCHOOL DAY WHICH IS COMMON IN MINNEAPOLIS SECONDARY SCHOOLS. INSTEAD OF ALL STUDENTS TAKING A STANDARD SCHEDULE OF SUBJECTS MEETING FIVE DAYS A WEEK, SOME MAY SELECT A VARIED PROGRAM WHICH COULD INCLUDE AS MANY AS ELEVEN DIFFERENT SUBJECTS DURING A YEAR.

THE RMS PROGRAM IS BASED ON A SIMPLE MATRIX WHICH ALLOWS COMBINATIONS OF TWO, THREE, FOUR AND FIVE PERIOD PER WEEK CLASSES WITHIN A SINGLE MASTER SCHEDULE. SIX PERIODS (F) ARE USED AS FLEXIBLE FUNCTIONS. PAST ATTEMPTS AT COMBINING FOUR AND FIVE PERIOD BLOCK CLASSES (THIS REFERS TO THE NUMBER OF PERIODS DEVOTED TO A SUBJECT, E.G., ENGLISH FOR ONE PERIOD MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY IS A FIVE PERIOD BLOCK) HAVE FAILED BECAUSE ONLY FOUR FLEXIBLE FUNCTIONS WERE USED IN THE MATRICES RESULTING IN SCHEDULES WITH UNBALANCED TEACHER LEADS.

| PER. | MON. | TUE. | WED. | THUR. | FRI. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | A | A | F | A | A |
| 2 | B | B | F | B | B |
| 3 | F | C | C | C | C |
| 4 | D | F | D | D | D |
| 5 | E | E | E | F | E |
| 6 | G | G | G | G | F |

FIGURE ONE

THE RMS PROGRAM ALLOWS PART OF THE SCHOOL TO REMAIN ON A CONVENTIONAL SIX PERIOD SCHEDULE WHICH IS ADEQUATE FOR THOSE STUDENTS WHO DO NOT CHOOSE TO EXPLORE WIDELY. OTHERS WHO WISH TO TAKE A MORE VARIED PROGRAM FEATURING FOREIGN LANGUAGES, ADVANCED ART, MUSIC, ETC., MAY CHOOSE A PROGRAM OF ACCELERATED CLASSES WHICH MEET FOUR OR LESS PERIODS EACH WEEK. STUDENTS WHO ARE LESS GIFTED IN ONE OR TWO AREAS MAY TAKE SOME CLASSES WHICH MOVE MORE SLOWLY ON A FIVE PERIOD PER WEEK BASIS WHILE THEIR OTHER CLASSES MEET FOUR PERIODS OR LESS AT AN ACCELERATED RATE.

SCHEDULE BALANCE IS ACHIEVED BY USING DIFFERENT COMBINATIONS OF THE SIX FLEXIBLE PERIODS AT EACH GRADE LEVEL:

| PER. | MON. | TUE. | WED. | THUR. | FRI. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | $X^1$ | | |
| 2 | | | F | | |
| 3 | F | | | | |
| 4 | | F | | | |
| 5 | | | | $X^2$ | |
| 6 | | | | | F |

FIGURE TWO - 9TH GRADE

| PER. | MON. | TUE. | WED. | THUR. | FRI. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | F | | |
| 2 | | | $X^2$ | | |
| 3 | F | | | | |
| 4 | | $X^1$ | | | |
| 5 | | | | F | |
| 6 | | | | | F |

FIGURE THREE - 8TH GRADE

THE REMAINING TWO PERIODS ($X^1$ AND $X^2$) ARE AVAILABLE FOR ACTIVITY PERIODS OR THEY MAY BE ADDED TO THE REGULAR PERIODS TO FORM FIVE PERIOD BLOCK CLASSES. IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT ONLY PART OF THE SCHOOL IS ON THE ACCELERATED PORTION OF THE RMS PROGRAM. THE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ON THE STANDARD SCHEDULE FOLLOW A CONVENTIONAL SIX PERIOD SCHEDULE.

PRIOR TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RMS PROGRAM, 7TH AND 8TH GRADE STUDENTS WERE OBLIGED TO DROP REQUIRED SUBJECTS TO TAKE A FOREIGN LANGUAGE. AT THE 9TH GRADE LEVEL, THEY WERE LIMITED TO DIFFICULT CHOICES. THE RMS PROGRAM PRODUCED DRAMATIC INCREASES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS AND AT THE SAME TIME ELIMINATED THE NECESSITY FOR DROPPING REQUIRED COURSES. THE COMPARISON BELOW ILLUSTRATES THE CHANGE:

| YEAR | STUDENT ENROLLMENT | FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT (SEMESTERS) |
|---|---|---|
| 1961-62 | 1464 | 561 |
| 1962-63 | 1402 | 1134 |
| 1963-64 | 1477 | 1172 |
| 1964-65 | 1480 | 1496 |

THE RMS PROGRAM WAS INSTITUTED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1962-63.

THE FOLWELL MULTIPLE VARIABLE PROGRAM WAS INTRODUCED INTO FOLWELL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ON A MODIFIED BASIS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1965-66. THE FMV PROGRAM, LIKE THE RMS PLAN, IS BUILT UPON A SIMPLE MATRIX WHICH ALLOWS FOUR AND FIVE PERIOD BLOCK CLASSES TO BE CONTAINED WITHIN THE SAME MASTER SCHEDULE.

| PER. | MON. | TUE. | WED. | THUR. | FRI. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | F | A | A | A | A |
| 2 | B | F | B | B | B |
| 3 | C | C | $X^1$ | C | C |
| 4 | D | D | $X^2$ | D | D |
| 5 | E | E | E | F | E |
| 6 | G | G | G | G | F |

FIGURE FOUR

X PERIODS MAY BE USED FOR ACTIVITIES OR BE ADDED TO THE REGULAR PERIODS TO FORM FIVE PERIOD BLOCK

CLASSES. AGAIN, ONLY PART OF THE SCHOOL IS ON THE VARIABLE SCHEDULE.

THE FMV DESIGN DIFFERS FROM THE RMS PLAN IN THAT ALL STUDENTS WITH VARIABLE SCHEDULES ARE MEMBERS OF ONE OF THE TEAMS AND ARE SCHEDULED INTO A FOUR HOUR TIME BLOCK WITH TEAMS OF TEACHERS. DURING THIS FOUR HOUR TIME BLOCK (PERIODS 1, 2, 5 AND 6 IN FIGURE FOUR) ANY NUMBER OF SCHEDULAR VARIATIONS MAY BE USED TO PLAN LARGE GROUP SESSIONS, NORMAL CLASSES, SEMINAR SESSIONS, INDEPENDENT STUDY, AND FIELD TRIPS.

ONE COMMON PREPARATION PERIOD IS GIVEN TO EACH TEAM OF TEACHERS SO THAT THEY MAY MEET REGULARLY TO DECIDE WHAT SCHEDULAR VARIATIONS THEY WISH TO USE FOR EACH UNIT OF WORK. SOME OF THE VARIATIONS DESIGNED FOR THE ORIGINAL FOLWELL MULTIPLE VARIABLE PLAN WERE:

I. STANDARD VARIATION

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 60' | 60' | 60' | 60' | 60' | 60' |

II. VARIATION A - 15' MODULES

| LARGE GROUP | SMALL GROUP | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 75' | 45' | 60' | 60' | 30' | 30' | 30' | 30' |

III. VARIATION B - 20' MODULES

| LARGE GROUP | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 80' | 40' | 60' | 60' | 40' | 40' | 40' |

IV. VARIATION D - 5' MODULES

| LRG. GRP. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | SEMINAR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 50' | 35' | 35' | 60' | 60' | 35' | 35' | 50' + |

V. VARIATION F - 10' MODULES

| 1 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 5TH HOUR CLASS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40' | 40' | 40' | 60' | 60' | 120' OR MORE |

VI.

| FLUID BLOCK | 3 | 4 | FLUID BLOCK |
|---|---|---|---|

FIGURE SIX

STUDENTS WHO CHOOSE TO BE MEMBERS OF A TEAM MAY HAVE STANDARD LENGTH PERIODS ONE DAY AND CHANGE EACH SUCCEEDING DAY TO DIFFERENT SCHEDULE VARIATIONS, E.G., II THROUGH VI, ACCORDING TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF A PARTICULAR UNIT OF WORK. DURING FLEXIBLE TIME BLOCKS NO BELLS ARE USED IN THOSE ROOMS AFFECTED BY SCHEDULE VARIATIONS. PART OF THE SCHOOL PASSES ON TO THEIR NEW ASSIGNMENTS WHILE OTHERS, ON A DIFFERENT SCHEDULE, REMAIN IN CLASS. THE EXPLOSIVE TONE OF A WHOLE SCHOOL CHANGING CLASSES AT ONE TIME IS SOFTENED WHEN STUDENTS PASS AT DIFFERENT INTERVALS.

THE FOLWELL VARIATION OF THE MULTIPLE VARIABLE PROGRAM HAS HAD A STARTLING EFFECT UPON FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS. DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1964-65, PRIOR TO THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW PROGRAM, SIXTY-ONE STUDENTS WERE ENROLLED IN GERMAN AND FRENCH AT THE NINTH GRADE LEVEL. OTHERS WHO WISHED TO TAKE FOREIGN LANGUAGES WERE EXCLUDED BECAUSE OF THE RIGID SCHEDULE REQUIREMENTS. IN THE FALL OF 1965, AFTER THE FOLWELL MULTIPLE VARIABLE PROGRAM WAS INSTITUTED ON A PILOT BASIS, TWO CLASSES OF GERMAN WERE ENROLLED IN THE SEVENTH GRADE, TWO SPANISH CLASSES WERE BEGUN IN THE EIGHTH GRADE, AND THREE GERMAN CLASSES AND TWO SPANISH CLASSES WERE FORMED IN THE NINTH GRADE. MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS CHANGED FROM 61 STUDENTS IN THE FALL OF 1964 TO 270 STUDENTS IN 1965 - AN INCREASE OF NEARLY 400 PERCENT DURING THE PILOT YEAR. THE FMV PROGRAM WILL BE EXPANDED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1966-67.

AT PRESENT THE AUTHOR IS WORKING ON A FLUID BLOCK SCHEDULE. THIS DESIGN IS A NATURAL OUTGROWTH OF THE EXPERIMENTAL WORK COMPLETED ON THE RMS AND FMV PROGRAMS. IN THE LATTER, THE FOUR HOUR TIME BLOCK WAS TREATED AS A VIABLE UNIT OF TIME WHICH COULD BE CHANGED, DEVELOPED, OR MODIFIED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE TEACHING TEAM.

THE FLUID BLOCK SCHEDULE WILL BREAK THE DAY INTO LARGE BLOCKS OF TIME, EACH OF WHICH CAN BE MODIFIED TO SUIT THE PLANNED LESSON REQUIREMENTS OF A TEAM OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS. FLUID BLOCK SCHEDULES CAN BE USED EFFICIENTLY IN SCHOOLS OF ANY REASONABLE SIZE. AN EXAMPLE OF AN FB SCHEDULE DESIGNED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF A SIX-YEAR JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL WITH FOUR HUNDRED SEVENTY STUDENTS IS SHOWN ON THE NEXT PAGE.

MERELY BY SCHEDULING GROUPS OF STUDENTS AND TEAMS OF TEACHERS SO THAT CLASSES APPEAR CONVENIENTLY TOGETHER (FIGURE 7), A FLUID BLOCK OF TIME CAN BE FORMED. ERASE THE CUSTOMARY SCHEDULE LINES BETWEEN GROUPS (FIGURE 8), AND TEAMS OF TEACHERS CAN FUNCTION WITH TEAMS OF STUDENTS WITHIN LARGE PERIODS OR FLUID BLOCKS OF TIME. WITHIN EACH TIME BLOCK THE TEACHING TEAM MAY VARY THE SCHEDULE EACH DAY USING ANY TIME MODULE NECESSARY FOR EACH VARIATION. LARGE GROUP MEETINGS, NORMAL CLASSES, SMALL GROUP SESSIONS, SPECIAL GROUPINGS, AND INDEPENDENT STUDY CAN BE PLANNED WITHOUT FEELING

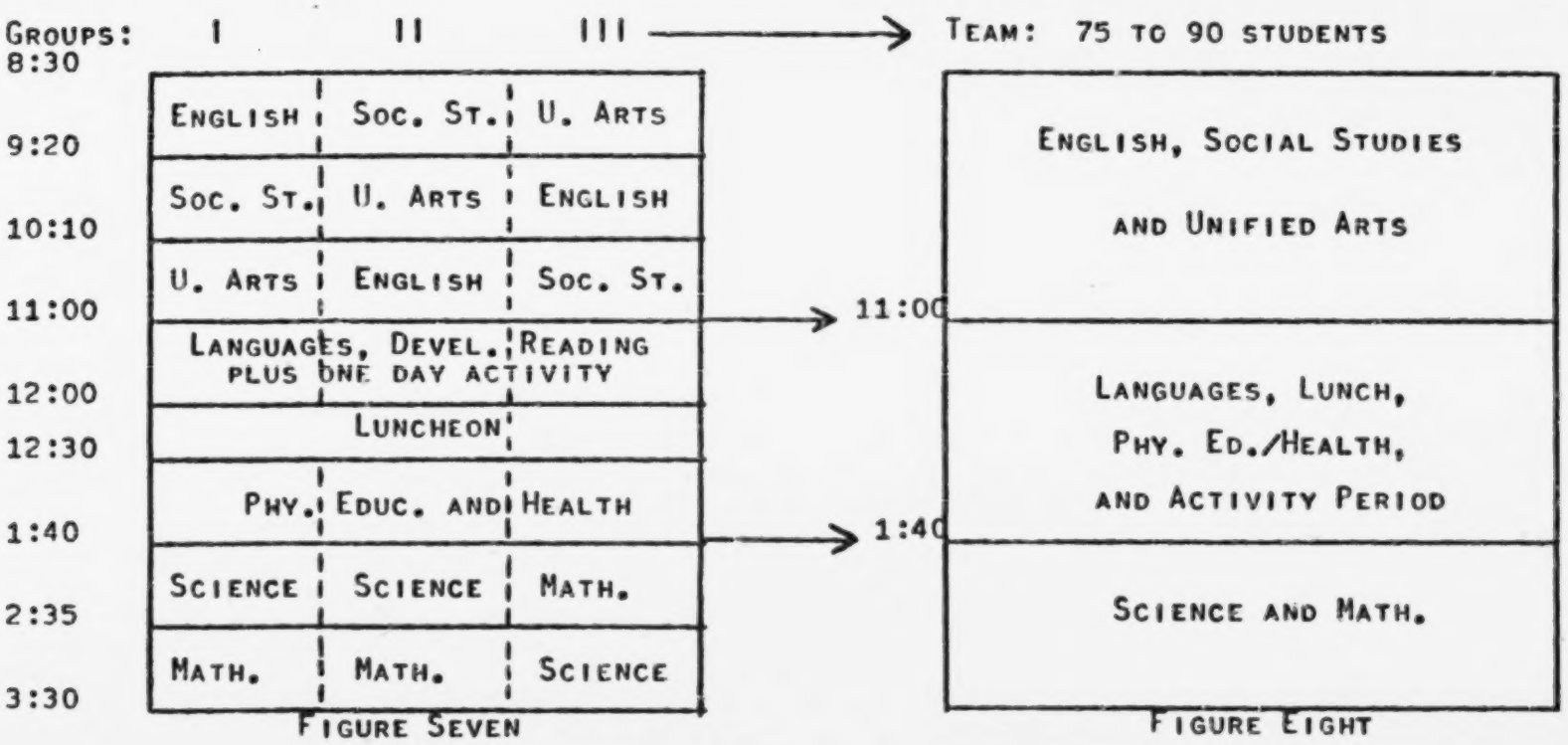


FIGURE SEVEN




FIGURE EIGHT

THE PRESSING RESTRICTIONS OF A STANDARD SCHEDULE. IN THE EXAMPLE CITED, THREE TEAMS OF TEACHERS WORK WITH 75 TO 90 STUDENTS WITHIN THREE LARGE PERIODS OF TIME.

THE FLUID BLOCK DESIGN COULD BECOME THE SCHEDULE OF THE FUTURE. IT IS SIMPLER TO CREATE AND MORE FLEXIBLE THAN SINGLE MODULAR SCHEDULES; IT HAS MORE VARIABILITY THAN EITHER THE RMS OR FMV PLANS. TEACHERS WILL BE ABLE TO LEAVE THEIR ISOLATED CLASSROOMS AND WORK TOGETHER IN TEAMS. PLANNING WILL BE DONE IN TERMS OF THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS. LANGUAGES WILL FIT NATURALLY WITHIN THE FLUID BLOCKS OF TIME. THE DESIGN APPEARS TO OFFER MUCH PROMISE. ONLY CAREFULLY CONTROLLED EXPERIMENTATION CAN GIVE US THE ANSWERS.

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